

interaction



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A message from the President



Dear Colleagues,

With a new school year come transitions, optimism, and a renewed commitment to serving our profession, public education, and our students. It is my honour to return to the role of President of OTF and my pleasure to welcome you back to school!

I hope that you found time to relax, rejuvenate, and restore your energies over the summer. I also know that thousands of you were actively engaged in professional learning opportunities offered through your Affiliates and OTF.

We are thrilled that so many members accessed and enjoyed high quality PD by teachers, for teachers! We are in the midst of processing Math AQ subsidies, working on building more OTF Connects free, online professional learning modules, preparing for the Teacher Learning and Leadership Program (TLLP) Summit, and so much more.

For newer members, I draw your attention to our Survive & Thrive online resource for beginning teachers, and the Special Education Gateway and Safe@School initiatives. Having been directly involved

in its development, I would also like to highlight the opportunity for new teachers, both permanent and long term occasional, to participate in the New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP) provided in every district school board with Federation involvement.

Other matters to turn our attention to this fall include the upcoming municipal and school board trustee elections. It is important that everyone exercise their democratic right to vote! Instilling these values by modelling them ourselves and engaging our students through Student Vote and CIVIX is a progressive way to ensure our democracy is vibrant and healthy.

Our newly refurbished website, otffeo.on.ca, is an excellent source of information on OTF's activities. And do follow us on Twitter and Facebook for news and updates. As well, I invite you to follow me directly: @RianOTF.

Rian McLaughlin
OTF President

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an effective partnership in learning

For any partnership to be successful, it must be built on trust and respect. Back in 2006, the Ontario Ministry of Education showed its trust by providing \$22 million to be shared among OTF and the Affiliates to develop and deliver professional learning to teachers.

OTF's first step was to do independent research, hold a summit and survey Ontario's teachers—what PD did they want and need. OTF's research report and video, *PD That Works*, shaped the \$4.4 million OTF program of professional learning which was offered over the next several years.

Now, these initial resources are almost completely spent, but OTF continues to offer OTF Connects and the on-line PD Calendar from these funds. From the evaluations received from thousands of teachers for the many workshops, conferences, projects and summer programs, we think we got it right.

OTF has also partnered with the Ministry on several other projects over the past several years including the Teacher Learning and Leadership Program (TLLP) and Safe@School.

In all programs, OTF showed respect for the teaching profession by making the opportunities cost-free or with a very modest fee, completely voluntary and by providing release time whenever possible. OTF also provided opportunities for teacher interaction during the learning and follow-up

OTF has always known that Ontario's teachers were very engaged in their own professional growth; however, the programs offered by OTF and the Affiliates proved that point



networking. All offerings covered a wide variety of topics, suitable for a range of subjects and grades. Often, OTF worked with subject/division associations.

OTF has always known that Ontario's teachers were very engaged in their own professional growth; however, the programs offered by OTF and the Affiliates proved that point. As well, teachers are provided with professional learning through their school boards. Large numbers also sign up to take AQ and ABQ courses. In fact, the Ministry subsidies for math AQs/ABQs, currently being administered by OTF, have surpassed expectations.

This partnership respects the professional autonomy of teachers to guide their own learning; it respects their time and involves them in a collaborative way. Ontario is regarded as a leader in this model of teacher professional learning. Through advocacy by OTF and the Affiliates, and with the trust and respect of the Ministry, an effective partnership in learning has been created.

Teacher learning program Built by consensus

The blunt hammer which was teacher recertification was repealed in 2004. As the Liberal Government stated in an open letter to the teachers of Ontario, "there is no 'replacement' for the PLP, because we see it as a flawed foundation from which to build....The Government does believe teacher excellence is key to progress in publicly funded education but, distinct from the last government, our assumption is that all teachers believe in this as well."

This ushered in a new era in teacher professional growth. The paper and pen qualifying test for new teacher graduates was abolished. PD days were restored. Induction and mentoring programs for new teachers (NTIP) were developed. Teacher performance appraisal was revised. Annual Learning Plans, which have teacher self-direction embedded, became part of the appraisal system. Funding was increased and direct funding was provided to OTF and the Affiliates to support the programs.

How this new model developed is, perhaps, even more important. This approach was the result of two joint working committees. In both cases, OTF and the Affiliates directly represented teachers. Numerous stakeholders in the public education system were also part of the process. Models weren't imposed—they were literally built by consensus.

Ontario's teachers engage in professional development in record numbers. Workshops, conferences, on-line learning, and collaborative learning and leadership projects, as well as the informal professional learning, provide rich opportunities. These programs are driven by demand and actually broaden teacher knowledge, support and practice.

That is why other jurisdictions look to Ontario as a model for teacher professional learning. More importantly, **it is why we must remember that it was not just handed to the profession.** The political action of teachers, outraged at the challenge to their professionalism and a regime geared more to public relations, is primarily responsible for the model we have today. And, the collaboration of teachers, education leaders and government was essential to the outcome.

A message from the Secretary-Treasurer

Rhonda Kimberley-Young
OTF Secretary-Treasurer



In September, faculty visits are top of mind for OTF so teacher certification and training seems a good place to start. Presently, we are in transition as the programs at Ontario's faculties move toward a two-year program for teacher training. This shift will ultimately impact the supply of qualified teachers, presently at an incredibly high number. However, in the meantime, it will create transition issues and challenges.

OTF is bringing together the various stakeholders for a more collaborative approach to these challenges and the many questions. Read more about this in the TED article below.

Many of today's teachers did not experience the mandatory teacher recertification regime put in place during the Harris Government.

Teachers were required to meet certain requirements or lose their certificates. These programs were driven by supply rather than demand and the quality of programs being offered varied greatly. This regime was created in the name of accountability and transparency. Across the province, teachers were offended as professionals and refused to participate; however, they continued engaging in valuable learning.

In response, the Liberal Government and Education Minister Gerard Kennedy put a collaborative process in place to find both effective and respectful ways of providing valuable, ongoing learning for teachers. Read in this issue why the PLP was repealed and why the new teacher induction program (NTIP) and a revised performance appraisal system including teachers' annual learning plans (ALPs) were created.

We'll also tell you about the trust the government placed in OTF and the Affiliates to be partners in delivering ongoing professional learning and innovative programs—by teachers for teachers. Fact is, teachers in Ontario take advantage of many varied and rich professional learning opportunities—as professionals and of their own accord.

If you question why this information matters, you need only look to attacks on the teaching profession elsewhere or the efforts of "think tanks" promoting privatization and choice in education. To make those arguments, undermining the professionalism of teachers is a first step. We know Ontario's teachers are professionals—this issue tells a little of the how and why.

New TED table established!

Fifteen months ago, the Ontario Government announced its decision to extend the province's initial teacher education programs to two years (four semesters). Under the announced change, the minimum required number of practicum days will increase from 40 days to 80 days and the number of teacher candidates graduating annually from Ontario's faculties of education will be cut in half (from approximately 9,000 down to 4,500).

Since then, Ontario's faculties of education have worked at a feverish pace to restructure their pre-service programs. The expanded offerings must be in place by September

2015. While this has meant that a great many decisions have been taken by the individual faculties of education, there is still a great deal that will need to be determined. For example, how will the impact of the extended programs be measured? How will associate teachers who do the important work of hosting the teacher candidates in the longer programs be recruited, selected, supported and recognized for their involvement? What will happen to Technological Studies and other programs that already have low enrollment, but are in high demand?

Recognizing the need to enable ongoing dialogue about these



important matters among education stakeholders in Ontario, the OTF Executive recently approved the establishment of a new teacher education working table. The Teacher Education Discussion Table (TED Table) is a new venue for detailed and open discussion among stakeholders and will be convened by OTF and the Affiliates three times a year. Invitations to stakeholders will be going out shortly and we anticipate a positive response to the much needed opportunity for dialogue that the TED Table will represent.

Awards & recognition

OTIP Teaching Awards

Three great teachers recognized!

On September 23, three Ontario teachers received the OTIP Teaching Award for excellence at a ceremony at the Toronto Airport Hilton.

Nancy Rawlinson

Elementary Teacher Category
Davisville PS, Toronto

Donna Foulkes

Secondary Teacher Category
West Credit Secondary School,
Mississauga

Joshua Tellier

Beginning Teacher Category
Holy Family French Immersion,
Woodstock

"OTIP and OTF are so proud to present these awards to



L to R: Nancy Rawlinson, winner Elementary Teacher Category; Roxanne Chartrand, OTIP/RAEO; Joshua Tellier, winner, Beginning Teacher Category; Rian McLaughlin, OTF President; and Donna Foulkes, winner, Secondary Teacher Category

Nancy, Donna and Joshua," stated Rian McLaughlin, OTF President. "They are truly representative of the exceptional teachers in publicly funded education in Ontario."

The Ontario Teachers Insurance Plan (OTIP) sponsors these awards which are administered by OTF.

To get more information about these winners and the awards, go to teachingawards.ca.



People for Education project *Measuring What Matters*

Measuring What Matters, a major P4E project, is in the second of a five year plan to broaden the definition of school success and to establish better mechanisms for measuring education progress in five areas: citizenship, health, creativity, social-emotional development and the learning environment.

OTF is participating on the advisory committee for the project. Well worth checking out at <http://www.peopleforeducation.ca/measuring-what-matters/the-goal/>.

OTF welcomes ten new Fellows

The OTF Fellowship is awarded annually to members and non-members. Those considered for a Fellowship have to meet one or several of the following criteria:

- outstanding service to OTF;
- outstanding service to education;
- enhancing the image of women in the field of education;
- advocating social issues, particularly as they impact upon women and children;
- furthering the positive image of women in their community; or
- contributing to the elimination of stereotyping in the school program.

Congratulations to this year's recipients.



L to R: Rosario Marchese; Sharon O'Halloran, ETFO; Geoff Deleplanque, OSSTF (back); Rhonda Kimberley-Young, OTF Secretary-Treasurer; Cindy Dubu , OSSTF; Bill Doyle, OECTA; Dominic Belle-Isle, AEFO (back); Julie Pauletig, OTF President; Sylvie H roux, AEFO (back); and Sharon Aloian, ETFO

Absent: Chris Karuhanga, OECTA

Professional Development

September 2014

otffeo.on.ca

Course subsidies for Additional Qualifications in Mathematics

Many teachers have already applied for the subsidy of \$450 for completion of an AQ or ABQ course in mathematics or an undergraduate math course that is a prerequisite for an AQ/ABQ Math course. For more information or to apply, check out Math AQs, ABQs at otffeo.on.ca.



Teacher Learning Co-op (TLC)

**Deadline for submissions:
October 24, 2014**

Would you like up to \$4,000 to work with other teachers on a self-directed teachers' learning initiative? Go to the **OTF Teacher Learning Co-Op (TLC)** at otffeo.on.ca for more information.

OTF Connects *OTF's online interactive*

OTF Connects will once again bring members together from across the province to learn, share and collaborate through many rich and relevant opportunities for self-directed learning.

Throughout the 2014-2015 school year, a special focus will be on supporting teachers to enhance their classroom practice with the effective use of technology and to gain skills and confidence in the area of mathematics. Webinars on critical thinking, environmental education, financial literacy and violence prevention will continue to be offered.

OTF Connects invites members to participate, share and interact with colleagues while they broaden and deepen their learning in areas relevant to their teaching.

Be sure to visit otffeo.on.ca in early October to register for the Fall OTF Connects offerings!

Not familiar with OTF Connects? Go to www.otffeo.on.ca, click on Learning then select **OTF Connects** from the menu to learn more or to view recordings of the many webinars.



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Teacher Resources

The **Teacher Resources** section of the OTF website contains a multitude of resource links as well as searchable Lesson Plans. These links are monitored and updated on a regular basis.

In addition, the Lesson Plans section contains lesson plans developed by teachers from several OTF professional development projects. More lesson plans and links to resources are added as they become available, so plan on visiting this site often. Look under the Learning page at otffeo.on.ca.

OTF Planboard

Get a web and iPad app that simplifies lesson planning and scheduling for teachers and supports collaboration among teachers. OTF Planboard enables teachers to get organized with their lesson plans online. Teachers can create, edit and share in one seamless experience. Look for **Planboard** at otffeo.on.ca.



What we did last summer...

Two major OTF professional learning options were a major success. OTF offered 10 summer institutes related to the technology and mathematics and 15 institutes related to the new curriculum and FNMI perspectives. Enrolment in the institutes exceeded expectations—more than 600 teachers.

Likewise, over 100 teachers attended the Teaching, Learning and Technology conference in August.



Bringing democracy into the classroom

Trustee and municipal elections are coming soon. Student Vote gives young Canadians the opportunity to experience the democratic process firsthand and practice the habits of an informed and engaged citizenship. It offers a parallel election for students under the voting age, coinciding with the election periods.

Check it out at <http://www.studentvote.ca/home.php>.



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